

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants have amended the application serial numbers to granted patent serial numbers to Pages 1 to 5 of the specification when applicable. The Applicants submit that these amendments introduce no new matter.

Minor amendments have been made to the layout of the claims to make them easier to read, as well as deleting two superfluous “ands”. Obviously these amendments add no new matter and raise no new issues for consideration.

Applicant is disappointed that Examiner has again failed to indicate where the prior art is believed to disclose the claimed features of the present invention.

In the present case, we provided pertinent arguments in the previous two responses as to why the present invention as claimed is distinguishable from the cited art. For Examiner's convenience, the substance of our two previous responses is set out below.

We requested in those two responses that Examiner identify where in the cited art the claimed features are believed to be disclosed, but to date we have had no response to these requests.

Applicant respectfully reminds Examiner that the purpose of prosecution is to identify issues related to patentability, and to work together to resolve these issues efficiently. If Examiner refuses to indicate where the claimed features are alleged to be disclosed, it is impossible for us to provide more proof that the present invention is not disclosed than we have already provided in previous reports.

It is Applicant's opinion that Examiner is looking for general features in the prior art, rather than reading the explicit language of the present claims.

For example, Examiner contends that “Ogniewicz discloses skeletonizing the image to produce an image...”. With respect, this language completely ignores the explicitly claimed features of:

“locating, within the image, features having a high spatial variance by thresholding and skeletonising the image to produce an image comprising single pixel width definition of features;”

Examiner is respectfully invited to either point out where these particular features are disclosed in Ogniewicz or withdraw the objection.

Similarly, Examiner contends that “Litwinowics discloses fitting curves to features and stroking an image to produce an impressionistic effect”. Again, Examiner is using general language, but claim 1 defines:

“discarding features of the produced image having a size less than a predetermined size;

fitting curves to the remaining features”

stroking the image with a series of brush strokes emanating from remaining features of the produced image in accordance with the fitted curves.”

This is considerably more than the general concept of "stroking an image to produce an impressionistic effect" as stated by Examiner. Litwinowics does not disclose "stroking the image with a series of brush strokes... in accordance with the fitted curves", since there is no disclosure of fitted curves in the Litwinowics. Again, Examiner is respectfully invited to either point out where these particular features are disclosed in Litwinowics or withdraw the objection.

In the event Examiner is not responsive to these arguments (and the specific questions and arguments set out below from previous responses), Applicant will request an urgent telephone interview with Examiner and Examiner's Supervising Examiner to discuss the situation.

Favourable consideration of this response is respectfully requested.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED 12 September 2003:

In particular, as acknowledged by the Examiner in paragraph 5 the document Ogniewicz "Skeleton-Space: a Multiscale Shape Description Combining Region and Boundary Information" does not describe stroking the remaining features of the image with brush strokes.

In addition to this, Litwinowicz "Processing Images and Video for an Impressionist Effect" defines that the brush stroke orientation is either constant or, as set out in Section (B) "Brush Stroke Orientation" the orientation is normal to the intensity gradient or at a predetermined angle. This document does not therefore describe fitting curves to the remaining features and then applying the brush strokes in accordance with the fitted curves.

SUMMARY OF RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED 24 February 2004:

In particular, as acknowledged by the Examiner in paragraph 5 Ogniewicz fails to disclose fitting curves to the remaining features.

The Examiner goes on to discuss Litwinowicz but does not refer to fitting curves to the remaining features. We have carefully reviewed this document and agree with the Examiner's analysis in that Litwinowicz does not describe brush stroking to remaining features at any point. In view of this, we believe that this document also does not describe stroking the image with brush strokes in accordance with the fitted curves.

We therefore submit that as neither of the cited documents described fitting curves to remaining features, then claim 1 is novel and inventive over the cited documents.

If the Examiner is minded to maintain the objection, we would appreciate an indication of where in Litwinowicz the fitting of curves is described.

It is respectfully submitted that all of the Examiner's objections have been successfully traversed. Accordingly, it is submitted that the application is now in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of the application is courteously solicited.

Very respectfully,

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